

Trestle into downtown Honesdale,
under construction, for Honesdale
Branch across West Branch of

Gravity
Railroad
loaded track
into



Completion, in one day, January 31, 1900, of the D&H Trestle over the West Branch of the Lackawaxen River, between West Eleventh Street and Park Streets, into Downtown Honesdale. Photo taken after November 19, 1899 (when Shepherd's Crook was removed and switchback at Shepherd's Crook was installed) and before February 1, 1900 (when South Canaan Loop was completed and steam line opened), the period that we refer to in Volume IV in this D&H series as Phase 3 of the conversion of the Gravity Railroad into the Honesdale Branch of the Delaware and Hudson Railroad (Phase 3: November 20, 1899 up to February 1, 1900: standard-gauge tracks, Shepherd's Crook removed and Switchback installed, Gravity Planes 9-12 and 18-20 removed and South Canaan Loop installed).

What are we looking at in this photograph, which was probably taken by Bodie, the well known Honesdale photographer)? We are looking west/northwest toward Park Street, which is the area where Wayne Memorial Hospital now stands. The bridge/trestle under construction is the bridge that spanned the West Branch of the Lackawaxen River near the end of Ridge Street (just west of the present hospital foot bridge). It is in this location that the original D&H trestle, in 1829, carried the Stourbridge Lion into railroad history.

The roadbed of the Honesdale Branch of the D&H between Waymart and Honesdale was established on the former loaded track of the Gravity Railroad which, between Keen's Pond and Honesdale was on the south side of the Lackawaxen River. After passing through Seelyville, the loaded track crossed from the south shore of the Lackawaxen River to the north

shore, before curving to the right in a broad curve, again crossing the Lackawaxen River, into downtown Honesdale. In this photograph, we see a vestige of the Gravity loaded track, with several coal cars on the track. In the Lackawaxen River, we also see the piers on which the loaded track crossed the Lackawaxen River. We also see a portion of the Honesdale Branch trestle that was completed to the north shore of the Lackawaxen River at the time that this photograph was taken. Chances are very good that the Honesdale Branch trestle on the south shore was also completed from the Lackawaxen River into downtown Honesdale. What is taking place in this photograph is the construction, probably in one day, of the trestle for the Honesdale Branch over the Lackawaxen River, using the piers in the river from the loaded track bridge as the foundation upon which the trestle would rest. The structural components of the about-to-be-constructed trestle over the river are stacked up, to the left of the trestle site, and ready to go. There are a lot of workers on site who will erect the section of the trestle over the river and connect it with the sections completed on both shores of the Lackawaxen River. The many non-railroad men in the photograph (fancy hats and coats) are there to watch the completion of the trestle, which will probably take place that day, making it possible for the Honesdale Branch of the Delaware and Hudson Railroad to open on the following day, February 1, 1900. On January 30, the loaded track of the Gravity Railroad was operational. On January 31 this trestle was completed. On February 1, 1900, the Honesdale Branch of the Delaware and Hudson Railroad opened.